

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **\$1.6 Million in Pacific Gateway Workforce Investment Network Grants To Provide Academic and Vocational Training For Area Youth**

To maximize outreach to youth in the communities served by the Pacific Gateway Workforce Investment Network's Youth Opportunity Center, the Network has issued \$1.6 million in grants to six entities to help youth access intensive academic and vocational training.

On June 17, the Long Beach City Council, authorized on behalf of the Workforce Investment Network, recommendations of the Workforce Investment Board to fund contracts for six Youth Career Academies: ACCORD/Community; Upward Bound Program, California State University, Long Beach Foundation; Centro CHA (Community Hispanic Association, Inc.); Goodwill, Serving the People of Southern Los Angeles County; Los Angeles Unified School District; and Occupational Therapy Training Program, Special Service for Groups.

"Youth can be changed through education, experience and employment. We've seen that changing one young person's life can change one family and sometimes, even one group of friends which changes more families. It is essential that we reach youth where they live and our Youth Academies will provide that valuable contact and service," said Bryan Rogers, Executive Director, Pacific Gateway Workforce Investment Network.

The Youth Career Academies will be funded from July 1, 2008, through June 30, 2010, to assist youth from Lomita, Long Beach, Signal Hill and Torrance in completing their education, accessing career and technical education and training, participating in internships, and other work-based experiences. Projects focused on collaborative strategies to link business, labor, education and community-based organizations in order to expose and prepare young persons for success in high-growth career pathways of particular strength in Southern California. Targeted industries included energy and utilities, healthcare, hospitality and tourism, retail, professional business services, culinary arts, and science-related occupations.

Projects linked these planned efforts to academic achievement and improvement, especially for youth who are basic skills deficient or in need of returning to school; education (short- and long-term vocational training) and work experience strategies; and sufficient supportive services and resources to ensure youth success.

The Workforce Investment Board's Youth Council released a Request for Proposals to identify projects and service providers who could provide projects that serve in-school and out-of-school youth who are economically disadvantaged and possess various barriers to completing an educational program or securing and retaining employment. The recommendations were made following a rigorous evaluation process.

